[P.17, A]

143 pears to be a cline from northwest to southeast, MS being replaced by Ns:

Population	MS	Ms	NS	Ns
Copper	0.1719	0.8703	0.0000	0.1578
West Hudson Bay	0.1534	0.8080	0.0000	0.2386
Baffin Island	0.1200	0.5943	0.0000	0.2857
Northeast Hudson Bay	0.1337	0.5646	0.0000	0.3017
Southeast Hudson Bay	0.0619	0.5662	0.0000	0.3719

114 143 144 The meaning of these differences is uncertain. The ABO findings taken alone could be used as evidence supporting the argument that the Eskimo living farthest south in Hudson Bay have a large admixture of Indian blood; indeed to the absurdity that they are pure blood Indians. But both the Duffy and the MNSs data destroy this argument. In point of fact so far as the MNSs data go the closer geographically the Eskimo come to the modern Indians the farther they recede from them genetically. It would seem to us that, as more complete blood groups and other genetic data accumulate, one can but conclude that there is no close genetic relationship between the Eskimo and the Indians of today. They may perhaps stem from a common stock, but if so the primary branching occurred a long, long time ago, while there has been little grafting since. Equally in our own studies there is surprisingly little evidence for replacement of Eskimo genes by genes of Whites. Such are present certainly, but not in such numbers in the populations we have studied as seriously to disturb the inherent Eskimo gene frequencies. If neither of these is the explanation of the variations then that explanation must lie within the Eskimo population itself.

114 143 144 174 The archaeologists have painstakingly defined at least two Eskimo cultures in the eastern Arctic, the Dorset and the Thule. It would seem to us not unlikely that the people of these cultures differed genetically, perhaps as much as the Indians of today do from the Eskimo, and that there

[P.17,B]

may well be in the present Eskimo population a Dorset residuum which is genetically recognizable. It is hardly to be expected that such recognition will depend upon the presence of a strange gene in one population that is absent from the other, but rather upon differences of frequencies of genes already known or to be discovered, differences such as are indicated in the above data. One can as yet draw no firm conclusions, but certainly the indications are enough to make further genetic studies, even more complete than the present one, worth-while.

SUMMARY

Blood group gene frequencies were determined based on samples from 320 Copper Eskimo as follows: *O*, 0.6770; *A*, 0.2914; *B*, 0.0316; *M*, 0.8422; *N*, 0.1578; *S*, 0.1827; *s*, 0.8173; *MS*, 0.1719; *Ms*, 0.6703, *NS*, 0.0000, *Ns*, 0.1578; P_1, 0.1842, P_2, 0.8158; *CDe*(±*Cde*), 0.4985; *cDE*(±*cdE*), 0.4906; *cDe*(±cde), 0.0109; Fy^a, 0.7500; Fy^b, 0.2500. The following phenotypes were found to have a frequency of 1.00; Lu (a − b +), K − k + Kp(a − b +), Le(a−) and Sec. The following antigens were not present in the population tested: He, M^g, Mi^a, Vw, C^w, V, Di^a, Be^a, By^a, and Wr^a. Differences between this population and other Eskimo populations studied were noted in the ABO, MNSs and Duffy systems.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are happy to acknowledge the continued support of the National Museum of Canada through Dr. J. Rousseau. For gifts of rare anti-sera we are indebted and grateful to Drs. E. R. Giblett, F. H. Allen, Jr., J. Mohn, T. Greenwalt, M. Shapira, M. M. Pickles, I. Dunsford, R. T. Simmons, P. Levine and I. Davidsohn. For making our stay at Coppermine comfortable and pleasant we are grateful to the Hudson's Bay Company and Factor C. Jones and Mr. Smith; and for helping us about our business, Cpl. D. McDougall and Mrs. McDougall, Father LaPointe and the Rev. Cannon Sperry.

ADDENDUM

Since this article was written we have obtained additional genealogical information from Mr. Wm. Joss, Manager of the

[P. 1]

MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE COPPER ESKIMO

INTRODUCTION

In 1914, when the Canadian Arctic Expedition established its headquarters at Bernard Harbour in Dolphin and Union Strait, on the western fringe of Copper Eskimo territory, the natives preserved their old culture, virtually unimpaired, despite contact with several explorers in the middle of the nineteenth century, and with others during the early years of the twentieth. The only visible change caused by these contacts was the introduction of a considerable quantity of iron, which the Eskimo hammered cold, as they hammered their native copper, and had already substituted for copper in knives, adzes, harpoon heads, and needles. From lack of ammunition the only men who possessed rifles, five in number, had fallen back on the bow and arrow, which was still the universal weapon of the chase. Of the arrows not tipped with bone about two-thirds bore tips of hammered copper and only one-third tips of iron; the ice chisel and other tools retained their copper blades and points; and the soapstone pot for cooking meat held undisputed sway in every household. All clothing was of skin or fur, mainly from the caribou and the seal; and in cut and adornment it followed without change the styles set by earlier generations. The blubber of the seal, burned in a soapstone lamp, provided the only artificial light, and throughout the winter months all the energies of the Eskimo were concentrated on the pursuit of seals at their breathing holes in the sea ice.

Ten years later the situation had undergone a profound change. Native copper had become practically valueless and served for rivets only. Bows and arrows had disappeared, because every native was now armed with a high-powered rifle. Other weapons and tools had steel or iron blades, metal cooking pots had ousted the soapstone vessels, and primus lamps and kerosene lanterns were spreading from home to home. Fur clothing was tending to follow western Eskimo patterns, and to be overlaid with bead-work, or with imported garments of cotton or wool. Dissatisfied with the old-fashioned snow-hut and skin-covered kayak, one native had even erected a plank cabin heated by an iron stove, and purchased a motor-boat to transport his household goods along the coast during the brief summer months. The tentacles of the fur trade had firmly gripped the region, and the trapping of foxes, animals of no economic importance in earlier times, now rivalled in importance the hunting of seals and caribou.

Fortunately, before this revolution occurred, the Canadian Arctic Expedition had brought out a large collection of Copper Eskimo specimens, nearly all of which are now stored in the National Museum at Ottawa. These specimens, and

28: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1946
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

These specimens, and random field-notes made during the course of the expedition, provide the foundation for the following report. It has been written at odd times during the last 25 years, but was so nearly complete by 1932, when the late Knud Rasmussen published his splendid "Intellectual Culture of the Copper Eskimos" (Reports of the Fifth Thule Expedition, 1921-1924, vol. IX, Copenhagen, 1932), that it seemed advisable to let it stand without any change or revision; consequently, the reader will find no references to Rasmussen's work.

In this volume the series of "Reports of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, 1913-18", reaches its conclusion. There will be no archæological paper, as originally planned, describing the Eskimo ruins on Barter Island.

I am indebted to Miss W. K. Bentley and Mr. O. E. Prudhomme for all the drawings in this volume except those in colour, which were made in the field during the winter of 1915-16 by the late Rev. H. Girling, the first Anglican missionary to visit the Copper Eskimo.

29 together again. Heel crimping was naturally confined almost entirely to the more decorative shoes. When not crimped, this type usually had one seam up the middle of the heel, whereas the plainer type frequently had two and even three.

294 A casing of sealskin (more rarely, caribou skin), undressed, and sometimes 281 not even dehaired, was sewn round the top of the shoe to hold a cord of plaited 291 sinew (*singiq*) that emerged through two holes at the back and tied in a bow over the instep. Two large patches of sealskin, dehaired but undressed, covered the whole or almost the whole of the sole, giving it double thickness; and whenever a hole wore in either patch, another was promptly superimposed on it. These patches had to be sewn on with concealed stitches that caught only the under surface, because the thread would quickly fray and break if it penetrated [481] to the outside. Natives who anticipated considerable walking on glare ice or very hard, firmly packed snow sometimes added also narrow, meandering patches —"creepers"—to give them securer foothold (Figure 10c).

[114] In the autumn of 1915, when the party with which I was travelling was still hunting inland, an Eskimo induced his wife to make him a pair of caribou-[122] fur overshoes and to reinforce them with extra soles of sealskin. From another [177] native I obtained a similar pair of caribou-fur overshoes that bore outer soles of dehaired caribou skin, and, over the outer soles, patches of sealskin. These were probably copied from the shoes of the inland Eskimo to the southeast, where they were invariably made from caribou fur, as the Copper Eskimo well knew. Around Coronation Gulf they were regarded with disfavour for ordinary use, because, although warmer, they readily soaked up the damp from the half-thawing floor of the snow-hut and immediately shed their fur. They were more practicable among the inland Eskimo, whose snow-huts were not so warm, because, lacking seal oil, they burned caribou fat in their lamps, which served in the main for lighting only.

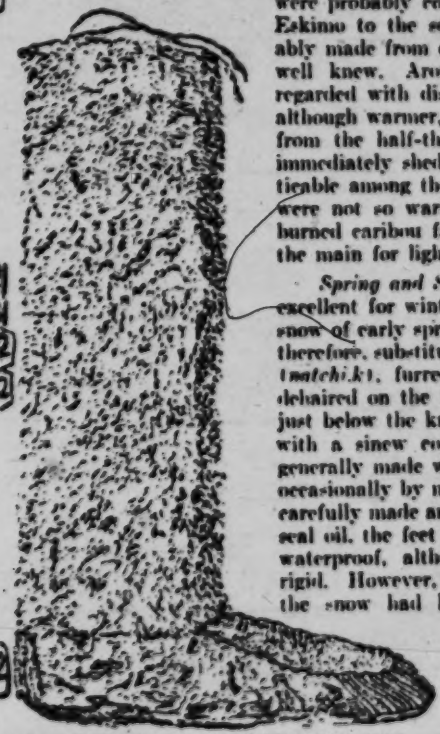

Figure 11. Man's spring boot. IV.D.1039. 1/4.

Spring and Summer Boots. Sealskin shoes were excellent for winter wear, but against the soft deep snow of early spring quite inadequate. The Eskimo, therefore, substituted for them long boots of sealskin (*natchik*), furred on the outside of the legs but dehaired on the feet (Figure 11). They reached to just below the knees, and were there tightly bound with a sinew cord that passed through a casing, generally made with an extra band of sealskin, but occasionally by merely sewing down the edge. When carefully made and saturated from time to time with seal oil, the feet of these boots were soft but quite waterproof, although the uppers were somewhat rigid. However, toward the end of spring, when the snow had largely melted, the streams were running, and pools of water lay everywhere, the Eskimo changed to their real waterboots (*iperautik*) (Figure 12), which were similar in shape, but dehaired throughout their entire

Hough again, in his well-known memoir,[1] distinguishes three kinds of Eskimo lamps on the basis of their use, viz. the house lamp, the travelling or summer lamp, and the mortuary lamp, the latter frequently being models.

Figure 48. Bag for dry grass, made from the lining around an animal's heart. IV,D.338. 1/1.

Neither of these statements is quite correct when applied to the Copper Eskimo. They had lamps of every size, from 2 or 3 inches long up to 30 inches; and small vessels 8 or 12 inches long were as common as lamps of 30 inches. From June to September or October, when most of the snow had melted from the land and the families were scattered in search of fish and caribou, the natives generally cached their lamps with the sleds on the seashore or on the margins of lakes, and used for fuel dwarf willow, heather, *Dryas integrifolia*, and other plants, instead of blubber. Consequently, they had no special summer lamp. But because their ordinary lamp seldom functioned during the summer months we cannot say with Porsild that it had lost its importance as a heater. It still remained the indispensable prerequisite of existence during two-thirds of the year for heat as well as for light.

[1] Hough, Walter: Ann. Rept. Smith. Inst., U.S. Nat. Mus., 1898, p. 1003.

28: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1946
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

412 321 325 [324] The most common mouthpiece was the astragalus of the caribou, though any piece of bone or antler, and even soapstone (Figure 117), might be shaped to serve the same purpose. When a man lacked a mouthpiece he often used the handle of his whittling knife or some other implement. The astragalus has a natural cavity of convenient size, but the rim is low on one side and the end of the spindle liable to slip out; consequently, a bone or metal peg was often inserted to raise the level of the rim in this place (Figure 118). Sometimes a small plate of copper or iron was driven into the bottom of the cavity through one side to give a hard, smooth base for the rotating spindle The latter feature may be of modern origin, but I am inclined to favour its antiquity on account of the number of specimens in which it is found, and the analogous stone sockets in other regions.

412 324

Figure 117. Mouthpiece for drill, of soapstone. IV.D.1678. 2/3.

412 321

Figure 118. Mouthpiece for drill, made from caribou astragalus. IV.D.296. 2/3.

412 325 322 *Adzes.* Hearne gives the following description of Copper Eskimo adzes. "Their hatchets are made of a thick lump of copper, about five or six inches long, and from one and a half to two inches square; they are bevelled away at one end like a mortice-chisel. This is lashed into the end of a piece of wood about twelve or fourteen inches long, in such a manner as to act like an adze: in general, they are applied to the wood like a chisel, and driven in with a heavy club, instead of a mallet. Neither the weight of the tool nor the sharpness of the metal will admit of their being handled either as adze or axe, with any degree of success".[1]

[1] Hearne's Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean, edited by J. B. Tyrrell, The Champlain Society, Toronto, 1911, p. 191. Hearne, it should be noted, did not use these "tokens" in use. I suspect, indeed, that they were not adzes, but toy adzes.

and a pointed bone or antler butt for planting the weapon upright in the snow. The butt was merely lashed to the end of the shaft with rawhide or sinew whipping; but the bone cap at the other end was riveted with bone or copper pins through two spurs that projected down the sides of the shaft, and the tapering end of the foreshaft was firmly wedged into its hollow by a packing of skin or fur. Through a hole drilled in the shaft just below the cap passed a sealskin thong that ran tautly one-third, one-half, or three-quarters the length of the shaft and was then knotted through another hole; it served, in conjunction with a piece of sinew attached to the hand line, to hold the harpoon head against the foreshaft. At the place where the sinew tucked under it, some hunters lashed the thong tightly against the shaft with a whipping of rawhide, or held it down with a copper "staple".

All the Copper Eskimo harpoon heads I have seen had blades separate from the head, although specimens of the old Thule culture, in this area as elsewhere, sometimes have the blade and head in one piece. The older Copper Eskimo harpoon heads were made of bone or antler, and the bone or copper blade, shaped exactly like an arrow point, was invariably set horizontally in the same plane as the line holes, and secured with a single rivet of bone or copper. The butt of the head was cut aslant, giving a single sharp spur, and a circular hole was drilled for the insertion of the foreshaft. Three of these old harpoon heads are illustrated in Figure 140.

Figure 140. Old harpoon heads. *a*, *b*: bone blades; *c*: copper blade. IV.D.1638, 600, 1620. 1/2.

The introduction of iron did not change the type of the Copper Eskimo harpoon head, but only its material. At first only the blades were of iron; the heads proper continued to be made from bone and antler. By 1914, however, nearly all heads had come to be of iron, or occasionally of brass, and what seems to have been a new feature was introduced, a lengthening and bifurcation of the butt, resulting in two, stout, chisel-edged spurs, which were themselves often notched (Figure 141). This change we must probably ascribe to influences from Hudson Bay, where the spur of the ordinary sealing harpoon head has been bifurcated for several centuries. Among the Copper Eskimo every metal harpoon head that came under my notice possessed this feature, but not a single bone or antler one, except the specimen that will now be discussed.

Figure 142 shows a harpoon head without separate blade that was included in a large collection of specimens brought back by Mr. Stefansson and labelled Minto Inlet, Victoria Island. If it actually came from that district, it must

surely have been unearthed in some old ruin of pre-Copper Eskimo times, for it is identical with specimens that have been dug up in old dwellings in both Mackenzie Delta and northern Alaska. I rather suspect, however, that it came from one of these western areas, as did several other specimens in the collection that were certainly wrongly labelled.

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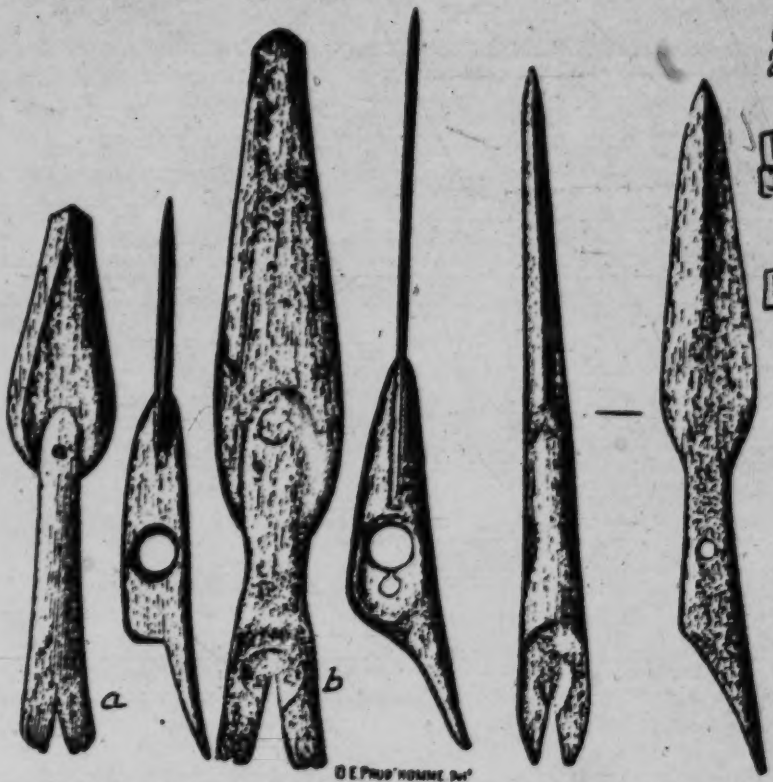

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Figure 141. Modern harpoon heads with iron blades. *a*, IV.D.313, 1/1; *b*, IV.D.1054, 3/2.

Figure 142. Bone harpoon head. IV.D.1334. 1/1.

The line attached to the head of the harpoon averaged in length a little over 2 metres and was made of plaited sinew, of sealskin, or of both combined, some hunters preferring sinew for the grip, but, for the toggle end, a sealskin thong less liable to fray. All lines were double from the toggle nearly to the grip; and to one or both strands, about 3 feet from the toggle end, was tied a short piece of sinew, which tucked under the thong running along the side of the shaft and held the lower part of the line taut until the seal was struck, when it immediately slipped out of place.

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When the line was of plaited sinew it was graded from an 8- or 16-ply weave down to a 4 or 6 ply. At times this was accomplished by twisting some of the strands together, a 12-ply line, for example, being combined in twos to make one of 6 ply, and this perhaps again to 4 ply; the two ends could be

[284]

28: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1946
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CHAPTER V

MISCELLANEOUS

493 *Sleds.* Copper Eskimo sleds had neither side pieces nor handles, but consisted merely of two stout runners joined by a number of crossbars. They averaged in length 14 or 15 feet, but some measured over 20 feet and others [484] less than 4. Sleds under 10 feet in length, however, were rather uncommon; being too short to carry all the household furniture, they served for short trips only, for transporting goods to and from the caches, and, when the family was blessed (or cursed) with many possessions, for relieving the main sled of part of its load.

493 313 [437] The most important parts of a sled were naturally the runners, for suitable logs seldom drifted up on the shores and the forests lay many days' travel to the south. Consequently, both single runners and the completed sleds were valuable articles of trade, current from one end of the country to the other, and natives from remote districts made long journeys to the spruce woods on Coppermine River to manufacture sleds for themselves. Under these conditions, one neither expected, nor could I find, any significant differences in size or shape between the sleds of different districts. One typical of several that I measured had the following dimensions:

	Ft.	Ins.
Length	18	1
Number of crossbars	14	
Breadth between runners	1	8
Width of runners at top		2½
Width of runners at bottom		2
Height of runners		10
Thickness of bone and mud shoeing		2

493 321 The runners of this sled had been shod with bones from a whale that drifted ashore near the eastern end of Dolphin and Union Strait; but the great majority lacked both this bone shoeing, and the shoeing of decayed driftwood that has been described by Stefansson,[1] though it escaped my own observation.

493 823 The same writer says that "In the fall, when the sled is to be used sod is cut in strips as long as convenient and about three inches thick and four inches wide. Lengthwise, along the flat side of these is cut a groove the width of the sled runner and the sod is put under the runners as shoeing. With a little water these are securely frozen to the bottom of the runners, the fuzz of the half-decayed wood holding them securely. The bottom of the runners is then rounded off with an adze or knife so the sod takes the form of a longitudinally bisected cylinder."

[114] I myself did not see this method of cutting and attaching the mud. The natives with whom I travelled on Victoria Island in the autumn of 1915 dug up their mould with mattocks, shredded it inside their snow-huts to remove the roots (which would tend to produce cracks), mixed it with water, and kneaded it into soft balls, each rather larger than a baseball, which they laid along the bottoms of the runners, kneaded together, and smoothed, first with their hands, then, after the mud had frozen, with their snow knives. A few weeks later they patched this shoeing in exactly the same way, after [illegible] had been chipped by sharp upstanding stones during their overland journey to the coast. Thenceforward it lasted throughout the winter, although every time a sled was used

[1] Anth. Papers, Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., vol. XIV, p. 78.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

PREFACE

One cannot read this charming narrative of the author's life during two years with the primitive Eskimos of the Coronation Gulf Region without getting a deep sympathy for these simple, unsophisticated children of the twilight, who are still living in their communistic state, and have not felt the burden of wealth—except perhaps that someone of their best men, like "Knife," may have so much domestic equipment that it is difficult to pack all his belongings on one dog sledge when they are wandering.

Surely many readers will feel a longing to live in the snow hut or in the tent under the good care of Mother Icehouse, to go stalking the caribou or watch for the seals at their breathing holes with Father Ikpuck and the "Runner," or to play with little bright sister Jenny Sunshine.

A charming people of happy children, not yet stung by the venom of our culture, not burdened by the intricate problems and the acid dissatisfaction of our society. Starving sometimes perhaps when food is scarce (but that does not last long); and when food is plentiful life is laughing happiness with no sorrows of the past and none for the morrow. They live happily but under extreme conditions. During ages they have learnt to master the severe forces of nature, and no other people can take their place and develop the possibilities of those northern regions. But contact with our civilization, when not carefully guarded as in Greenland, will upset the whole system of their life and community, and they must sink.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

CHAPTER II

AN OUTPOST ON THE POLAR SEA

177 IN the summer of 1912 a pioneer trader cruising along the Arctic coast of Canada discovered, behind a low island, a tiny deep-water cove, afterward named in his honour Bernard Harbour. The cove is now the regional headquarters of three distinct organizations—the Hudson's Bay Company, the Anglican Mission, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police; but when the *Alaska* and the *North Star* sailed into it, in August, 1914, the country was still bare
133 and seemingly uninhabited. Low, stony ridges, sparsely covered with mosses and lichens, concealed all the region to the south and west, and across the narrow neck of land that bounded the cove on its eastern side was a second inlet similar to our own, but less sheltered from the prevailing winds. On this narrow neck of land we decided to set up our station.
114 We spent two busy days unloading our cargoes onto the beach. A propeller blade of the *Alaska* had been broken against an ice-cake, and the engineer had

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

to replace it with another before she could return to Herschel Island for our yearly mail and the remainder of our supplies. He accomplished the work without difficulty, and the schooner left a few days later with Anderson in charge. We expected her to rejoin us before the sea froze over for the winter, but on her return voyage she encountered a heavy gale and an unprecedented rise of the tide at Cape Bathurst, 300 miles west of Bernard Harbour. Tide and gale left her high and dry on the beach, and by the time she was unloaded and refloated the season had grown too late for her to venture out again. Anderson himself travelled along the coast with a dog-team and rejoined us in midwinter; but throughout the autumn there were only five white men and one Eskimo at Bernard Harbour to construct a station and carry on the scientific work.

Chipman, the senior topographer, was in charge of the party, but so smoothly and tactfully did he rule that no one felt his guiding hand. We allowed Palaiyak, our Eskimo, to devote his whole time to hunting seals and caribou. The rest of us took turns at the cooking, our official cook having gone west on the *Alaska*. Scientists are not always successful in the kitchen. I myself was very partial to boiled rice, one of the few dishes I could undertake with certainty; but since plain, unadorned rice, and even rice with raisins in it, seemed to be unpopular with the other

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

114 men, I improvised extra meals of powerful doughnuts to dull the edges of their appetites. Chipman, O'Neill, the geologist, and Johansen, the biologist, always provided good fare, although Johansen's enthusiasm for pure science often restricted us to two meals a day. But it was for Cox, the junior topographer, that we reserved our greatest respect. He startled us one day by placing on the table a splendid cake covered with rich chocolate icing. Our eyes gleamed with anticipation; it was the first real cake we had seen for many months, and each man grabbed simultaneously for the dish. O'Neill won; two quick cuts of the knife landed a huge slice in front of him. Then a roar of laughter shook the room, for the body of the cake was solid cold cornmeal mush left over from our breakfast.

Our first task after the *Alaska* left was to erect a 132 house for the approaching winter. September with its shortening days had come upon us, and snow might fall at any time, snow that would not disappear before the following June. Building in the Arctic is by no means as difficult as in the Antarctic. There is little or no vegetation in the latter region, and in consequence no soil, so that a winter house offers no comfort unless it has double or triple walls of close-fitting boards lined with tar paper, felt, or other non-conducting 134 material. But the tundrous soil of the Arctic provides the finest kind of sheathing for a house. All that is needed is a wooden framework strong enough to

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916). 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

114 dently of one another. Consequently the hut developed a queer twist forward, and the wall sagged in the middle of one side through the weight of an enormously thick rampart of turf. A building inspector would have condemned the structure in unequivocal terms, and ordered its immediate demolition; but we cheerfully removed the superfluous turf and added a few supports in the weaker places to prevent our own destruction. We then built a large porch at the eastern end to protect the door, and roofed it with a heavy tarpaulin. Last of all we lined the inner walls with white canvas, and fitted bunks around three sides, one for each member of the party.

Thus our rude hut encased in earth became the cosiest dwelling within 500 miles. For two long years we fondly called it "home," and on occasions of state hoisted the Canadian flag. The banner was changed after our return to civilization, the hut becoming the headquarters of an Anglican mission; but even today, twelve years after its erection, the frame stands perfect, a lasting monument to the skill and ingenuity of its builders.

After the building of the house came the construction of caches. Most of the larger cases containing cereals, hardtack, and other foods had gone to make the porch, which served on occasion also as a meat-cache. The ammunition, sacks of flour, and various boxes of miscellaneous provisions were piled in three

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

heaps and covered with heavy tarpaulins. A single large tent protected the travelling equipment, the bales of skins and spare clothing, and the scientific instruments. We stacked the distillate for the engines on the beach just above high-water level, and laid beside it two large tanks, thinking they held alcohol for scientific specimens. Only one tank was required during the two years we spent in the country. We broached the second just before leaving, and found that it contained, not the alcohol we were expecting, but tooth-brushes, tooth-paste, and shaving-soap, those indispensable articles of toilet of which we had almost forgotten the names.

The construction of caches by no means ended the work around the station; we had still to gather driftwood from the neighbouring beaches for our winter fuel. Fortunately we could combine this task with scientific work. When Johansen and O'Neill went out to collect insects, plants and fossils along the coast, they made piles of all the logs they discovered in their wanderings; and when Chipman and Cox sounded out the channels leading into our harbour they brought back in their launch several cords of wood gathered on the islands lying off shore. Sleds and dog-teams replaced the launch as soon as the sea froze over, and a wood-gathering party sallied out once a week all through the autumn and winter months.

At the end of the harbour we set a large fish-net,

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

114 which was inspected every second day. It yielded at
[136] first a few salmon-trout weighing from seven to ten pounds, but when the fall came, nothing but sculpins, a small fish reputed to have a very delicate flavour. It may be that this reputation properly attaches to another species, for all that we captured were so bony that we could never discover any meat. Johansen was pleased with them, however, because they swelled his biological collection beyond all measure; whereas the salmon-trout he had to send into the kitchen after the briefest examination of their colours.

114 Our main hope for a winter supply of fresh meat
136 rested on the caribou which migrated each spring from the barren grounds to the Arctic coast and the islands that lie north of it. The routes they followed varied from year to year, but we confidently expected that some at least of the numerous herds which pastured on Victoria Island during the summer months would cross the strait in the vicinity of Bernard Harbour on their return migration. Palaiyak, who was an experienced hunter, wandered out in search of them nearly every morning. The large herds never came, although individual caribou and a few small herds of three and four strayed within a radius of ten miles. Of these Palaiyak secured his fair share; but our party of six consumed so much meat that only a little could be stored away for the winter. We discovered afterward that the lateness of the freeze-up had caused

29:' Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
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the main body of the caribou to migrate along the southern shores of Victoria Island and cross the strait farther to the eastward. 114 136

Seals were as valuable to us as caribou, if only to feed the dogs which, like ourselves, preferred a diet of fresh meat to pemmican; consequently the shooting of seals and ptarmigan became our principal recreation at the end of each day's work. It is not easy to hit the small, round head of a seal that appears just above the water-line fifty or eighty yards away and disappears a few seconds later; the chances of success are particularly slim when you are kneeling in the bow of a small Peterborough canoe that bobs up and down with each wave. Yet we shot over a score of seals before the winter closed in, Palaiyak himself killing six in one day. We fed all the meat and blubber to the dogs, retaining the livers for our own table. Fried seal-liver for breakfast, followed by roast ptarmigan at noon, would delight the heart of any epicure. Even the dogs showed their appreciation, for more than once they broke into the meat-cache and cheated us of these hoarded luxuries. 114

In spite of these varied activities, scientific work was by no means neglected. Chipman and Cox established the latitude and longitude of our station, placed the meteorological instruments in position, and connected the anemometer with a small electric bulb inside the house so that we could ascertain the direction and

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114 velocity of the wind by simply moving a switch; the winter before, with a different type of anemometer, we had crouched in the snow outdoors and read a dial on the base of the instrument. We made soundings, too, inside and outside the harbour, and Johansen collected marine specimens in both places, using a drag-net towed behind the launch during the autumn months, and, after the freeze-up, a hand-net let down [126] through holes in the ice. On stormy days we developed photographs and worked up our field-notes of the preceding year.

Sunday was generally a day of rest, given over to reading, long walks, and similar recreations. Saturday evenings we devoted to bridge, a game that was strictly forbidden on other days of the week. As we sat around the card-table one stormy night, Palaiyak reported that the wind was carrying away the tarpaulin that covered the porch. We dropped the cards on the table and rushed to the rescue, not lingering to put on overshoes or heavy clothing. Two men climbed to the roof and held it down with their weight; the others sought around the caches for boulders, bags, and anything else that would serve to batten down the tarpaulin. It was pitch dark, and the snow, driven by the howling gale, lashed our faces like hail. Cox, carrying a huge block of ice in his arms, crashed into Chipman, who was packing a sack of coal. Fingers and toes began to freeze, and excitement ran high for

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a few minutes. But gradually the tarpaulin ceased to flap, the men on the roof came down from their perches, and we mustered around the warm stove again to thaw out our members and count the casualties.

The expedition had four dog-teams, each at daggers drawn with the rest so that we chained them in separate places; but often a dog broke loose at night and prowled around the caches. The other dogs then strained furiously at their chains, and half a dozen, breaking free, pounced on some detested enemy, rolled it over with their united weight, and ripped open its belly. Whoever first heard a chorus of howling outside immediately gave the alarm and, without waiting to dress, rushed into the midst of the fray, kicking and clubbing to right and left; yet even so we lost six dogs in the space of three months because we failed to turn out of our sleeping-bags in time. Idleness always breeds mischief; in summer the dogs fought for mere exercise, but in winter hard work quenched their lust for battle and made them content to sleep at night.

The time passed quickly, and almost before we realized it the land was buried in snow and the sea congealed into a solid field of ice. A stranded ice-hummock, more than a year old, supplied us with water, and the dogs grew familiar with their traces again from dragging the heavy blocks of ice to our tank. We expected each day to see the Eskimos of

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114 whom we had twice caught glimpses during the summer; but they failed to appear. At last I made ready a sled and dog-team to search for them forty miles to the westward around Stapylton Bay, Cox volunteering to accompany me, because it is never wise for a man to travel alone in the Arctic.

Our rations for the journey included a supply of white beans, which I determined to cook beforehand to save time and fuel on the trail. I carefully measured two gallons into a three-gallon pot, covered them with water, and set them to boil on the stove. But they seem to have swollen beyond my expectations, for my colleagues declared that before the afternoon ended I had filled every pot in the house, and commandeered every cauldron around the station in a vain effort to stem the rising tide.

We travelled three days, and found no Eskimos in the vicinity of Stapylton Bay. The ice was soft and sticky, but we struggled along to Hope Point, a distance of twenty-five miles. Before we reached the point a dark line in the sky above the horizon warned us that the sea was not everywhere covered with solid ice, and just beyond we came up against a great lead of water that stretched as far as the eye could see. Farther [221] progress was useless and indeed impossible. The season was too early; no Eskimos would settle on the coast while the sea remained open. So we cached

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most of our pemmican on a low promontory and with lightened sled regained the station in one day. 114

Though we found no Eskimos on this short trip we learned two things that proved of value later. We discovered, first, that a single-walled tent is hardly comfortable in temperatures below the freezing-point. We had always used double tents in winter, but the mildness of the weather on this occasion tempted us to experiment with a Burberry tent, of single thickness, that weighed only thirteen pounds, and had a texture so close that it well-nigh excluded the light. A thick layer of frost settled over its inside the first night we set it up, and the slightest touch on the walls brought an icy shower upon our heads. The heat of the stove then changed the frost to water, which trickled over our sleeping-bags; and when the stove was out the inrush of cold air converted the water to ice, impossible to dislodge either by shaking or beating. So our thirteen-pound tent grew stiffer and heavier day by day, and weighed almost sixty pounds at the conclusion of the trip.

We learned further, what was perhaps of greater importance, that there were always enough sticks along this coast within a few hundred yards of any camping-spot to cook supper at night, dry all one's clothes, and then to cook breakfast in the morning. Unfortunately, with only a small oil-burning stove, we ourselves could

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make no use of it. We had left behind our usual travelling stove because wood had been scarce in the immediate vicinity of Bernard Harbour, and we feared that what little might lie on the beaches to the west would be buried beneath the snow. The primus stove cooked all our meals without much trouble, but would not dry our clothing; and to pull on frozen boots and mittens each morning was far from pleasant. Moreover, the coal-oil tainted the atmosphere of the tent and ruined my delicious beans. The next party travelling along this coast should discard the primus altogether and use a wood stove only.

The weather grew steadily colder after our return; in the space of a week the harbour ice increased in thickness from seven inches to two feet. We had long since given up all hope that Anderson's schooner, the *Alaska*, could return to Bernard Harbour before the next summer, and we wondered what had befallen her on the 1000-mile voyage. Chipman and O'Neill, who had orders to re-map the coast-line half-way to Herschel Island, decided to begin the work immediately and travel as far as Cape Lyon, or at least until they discovered some trace of our commander and his party.

They left us on November 18, just a week before the sun finally vanished for the winter. Cox and Johansen, who accompanied them for the first few miles, reported that their dogs were progressing steadily over smooth, hard snow at the rate of about

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three miles an hour. There now remained at the station only four men—Johansen, Cox, myself, and the Eskimo Palaiyak. The number was reduced to three a few days later, for the winter night was drawing near and my work called me away to the snow-huts of the Eskimos.

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CHAPTER III

THE PEOPLE OF THE TWILIGHT

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GLOOMY and barren seemed the country around Bernard Harbour when we first set foot upon its shore—a land of long twilights soon to be swallowed up in a longer night. A few vestiges of habitation there were—stone rings that marked old camping-sites, and shallow pits from which the hunters had launched their arrows at the passing caribou. But of the Eskimos themselves, of those dwellers in the twilight who even then were awaiting the dawn of the new age, we saw no sign.

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It was they who discovered us a few days after our arrival, and sent two families down to reconnoitre. Their tent, nestling in a narrow fold among the ridges, caught the keen gaze of Anderson, who was gathering botanical specimens before sailing for the west. Two men armed with long knives advanced to meet him, and some women and children peered anxiously around the corner of the tent. He patted his chest and pro-

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nounced his name. Their expressions changed instantly, 114
for Anderson had visited the Coppermine River three 123
years before and his name had spread far and wide. "Andeseena," they cried. "It is Andeseena. We are glad, we are glad." Invited by gestures to accompany him down to the harbour, they followed with alacrity, and gathered on the beach beside our anchorage. We feasted them to their hearts' content, and gave them a few presents which, trifling enough to us, appeared in their eyes riches beyond measure. They left us the following day to return to the interior, and we saw them no more until the winter.

Another band heard of our friendliness and descended to the station in September. They halted when they saw Palaiyak and myself on the beach, and, standing in line on the ridge above, raised and lowered their hands to show that they held no weapons. We had been hunting seals, and carried rifles, which seemed to increase their nervousness; so we laid them on the ground and answered the peace-signal, repeating it two or three times as they anxiously awaited our approach. Dried fish and hard bread dissipated their fears, and some petty gifts unlocked both their tongues and their curiosity. They introduced their wives and [224]
children to us the next morning, and departed inland before noon to resume their caribou-hunting.

The timidity of these Eskimos came not from ordi- 829
nary cowardice, but from a superstitious dread of the

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mysterious powers which they believed all white men possessed. The leader of the second band, whose right hand was tightly bandaged and whose thumb lay inside a small bag suspended from his neck, sufficiently attested their physical courage. Three weeks before he had stalked and wounded a grizzly, and when the infuriated animal attacked him he had thrown away his bow and killed it with his hunting-knife. His thumb was the price of the encounter, and he kept it as a souvenir. But a bear was a familiar adversary, a white man a being unknown; and this old hunter, who did not shrink from the grizzly, trembled with fear the first time I touched his arm.

Except for one other brief visit from the second band we saw no more of the Eskimos until the winter. Only Chipman, travelling far inland in search of caribou, encountered one of our early acquaintances packing dried fish from a cache. The Eskimo offered him a salmon rather heavily encrusted with mould, and Chipman returned the compliment by dividing up his sandwiches. Side by side they sat down on the edge of a lake to eat their lunch, though neither could understand a word of the other's language. *"Kovearnarksilekpakpogle,"* said the hunter to open up the conversation; and Chipman, not to be outdone, patted him on the back and responded, "Good for you, old fellow, good for you." Both broke into peals of laughter and repeated the performance. They separated at

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123 returned to the station, that I might prepare an outfit and leave with him early the next morning.

My guide was greatly alarmed when he found himself alone inside our house with three white men and an Eskimo from an unknown tribe. To calm his fears I showed him an old book about Greenland. A picture of a toy dog excited his curiosity, and he tried to take the animal up in his fingers. When the hour grew late we made him a bed on the floor beside Palaiyak; but he sat staring in front of him, too frightened to lie down. Palaiyak slept soundly; one after another the rest of us turned into our bunks and extinguished the lamps until only the night-light remained. The house was wrapped in silence; even the dogs outside lay still. At last he mustered up his courage, stretched himself out under the skins, and slumbered noisily.

114 We passed the first night in a snow-hut on one of the Liston and Sutton Islands, reaching the coast of Victoria Island late the next evening. There was no moon, but the dim light of the hurricane-lantern enabled my skilful companion to construct a new hut almost as quickly as by daylight. While he was building the walls I closed all the chinks and cracks with soft snow to keep out the cold air. I carefully adjusted, too, the snow-block that served as a door, for I was determined to be warmer this night than I had been the night before. We both slept soundly until morning, when I rose, lit the lantern, and tried to ignite the

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primus lamp. But the lamp refused to burn, and even the lantern began to go out. Then I realized that I had made the hut too air-tight, that the oxygen was exhausted, and that we would quickly smother unless we broke down the door and let in some fresh air.

Skirting the coast-line, we came upon fresh tracks leading away from a primitive fox-trap built of snow-blocks. Presently we sighted four men coming from different directions, who ran toward a common focus behind a ridge as soon as they noticed our sled. My companion raced ahead, flinging up his arms in the peace-signal as he, too, disappeared from my view. I followed more slowly with the dog-team, and, breasting the ridge, discovered the four strangers lined up as though on parade, the tallest man on the right. He announced his name, I told him mine, and, stepping down the line, introduced myself to the next man with as much formality as at a president's levee. But the last youth had three names, all very long; and he pronounced the three in one breath. My ears could not register so many ponderous syllables, and I said with a smile, "Phew, *takirut* (What long names)." The strangers gasped at this amazing breach of etiquette, but immediately saw the humour of the situation and laughed uproariously.

We approached their village in triumph, two of the men escorting me in front, two racing behind with my companion. Their twelve snow-huts lay at the bottom

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with their own country, which contained enough seals and caribou to satisfy all their needs.

I intended to revisit the settlement on Victoria Island at the earliest opportunity, but preferred to choose my own travelling companions. Our guests therefore returned alone, while I arranged to spend a few days in the hut of the leader of our local tribe. My host, the hero of the skirmish with the grizzly, had now recovered the use of his right hand, and was preparing to cross to the Liston and Sutton Islands for the seal-hunt, since it was still too early in the winter to build a hut on the sea-ice far away from land. He suggested that I should join his train to the islands and push on later to Victoria Island, which was but thirty-five miles beyond; and as the invitation accorded well with my plans I accepted gladly.

The wife of my host was Light, the lady who had filched the pot and the frying-pan from our station. It has not been my habit to lodge among thieves, but my experience on this occasion was most encouraging. Light was charming as a hostess. She licked my plate before each meal that I might eat from a clean dish, and when handing me boiled seal meat from her steaming pot she squeezed it tenderly between thumb and forefinger that no surplus juice might drip on my clothing. Lacking candy, she showered on me the national substitute, delicate cubes of oily seal-blubber;

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123 262 but, lacking the national taste, I slipped most of them surreptitiously to the dogs.

114 123 Two of the five families in this tribe crossed to the islands a day earlier than the others. I accompanied the second party, which started out in the darkness of the morning. After traversing the first nine miles without difficulty we came upon rough ice that had been piled into jagged hummocks by the autumn gales, and my light sled, modelled after a European pattern, upset three times before we passed through. 114 493 The Eskimo sleds were more stable, for their crossbars rested directly on the stout runners, and with the heavier articles, such as stone lamps and bales of meat and blubber, lying at the bottom, the centre of gravity was close to the ground. None of them overbalanced, although they were piled six feet high with the household possessions.

114 823 The nearest of the islands was Putulik, "the island pierced with a hole"; for legend stated that a large cave extended under the water from one side to the 114 other. We approached it shortly before dark, and 342 my host sent forward his twelve-year-old son to pick out a house-site. The inexperienced lad chose a spot where the snow was too shallow, but his father, sounding the depth all around with a long stick of antler, quickly found a more suitable location. While the men erected their huts, the women built low ramparts around the outer walls to increase the warmth inside

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and to serve as storage-places for the bales of clothing. In little more than an hour the lamps burned brightly again in every home and we were dining sumptuously on dried trout and frozen salmon.

The snow-hut of the Eskimo is too well known to require a detailed description. It resembles the upper half of a sphere, slightly flattened at the top, with a diameter at the floor level of about nine feet and a maximum height slightly below six. A low platform covered with musk-ox and caribou robes takes up more than half the floor space; it serves as a bed by night and a place for sitting and working during the day. The entrance, which faces the middle of the platform, is simply a hole at the bottom of the wall large enough for a person to crawl through on hands and knees; a single snow-block at night makes a satisfactory door. To the right (or left) of the entrance is the saucer-shaped lamp for burning seal-blubber; the stone cooking-pot hangs over it, and over the pot is a large tray or rack where boots and mittens are spread out to dry. A table between the lamp and the sleeping-platform completes the furniture, but bags containing meat and blubber, and dishes of various kinds, litter the floor on both sides of the entrance. Finally, a low-roofed passage extending outward from the doorway ten to thirty feet leads into the open air.

The adjoining plan of a two-roomed hut, and the photographs scattered throughout the book, will give

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342 a better idea of its shape and internal arrangements
352 than a lengthy description. Theoretically a snow-hut may be of any size, provided you have ladders, or timber to form a staging. The Eskimos have neither.
345 To build a large dance-hall like that shown in the plan they stand on boxes, bales of clothing, and anything that may be available. So the height of their largest hut never exceeds eight feet, and the diameter is limited to correspond. Being a sociable people, however, two families often share a single dwelling, and two or three others arrange their huts so that they open onto the same passage.

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Imagine us, then, sitting on the edge of the sleeping-platform eating our supper, myself at one end of the line, Mrs. Light at the other facing her table and lamp. The different members of the family are grouped between us, two boys, a grown-up nephew, and lastly Mrs. Light's husband, who naturally has a [431] seat beside his wife. The youngest boy carries presents of fish to the inmates of the other huts, and two little girls who return with him, bringing similar offer-

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ings for us, stand shyly inside the doorway, kicking their feet together restlessly as though knocking off the snow. Every one is tired after the day's journey, and as soon as the meal is ended strips off his clothes, tucks them under his head for a pillow, and glides into a sleeping-bag of caribou fur. Mrs. Light is the last to retire, for she still has some small duties to perform. She calls in the dogs from the passageway, one by one, throws them a few strips of blubber, and drives them out with the snow-duster, a short stick for beating the snow from our garments. Then she adjusts the lamp for the night, turns our boots and mittens so that they will dry on both sides, fits the snow-block into the doorway to keep out the cold air and the dogs, and slips quickly into her husband's "double" bag of caribou fur. Most of the inmates sleep with their mouths open, and their loud snores reverberating inside the hut drown the less resonant notes of the dogs in the passage.

Leaving Putulik, I rejoined my late acquaintances on Victoria Island. The sun no longer climbed above the horizon, and the "day" was limited to the twilight hours from 9:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.; but a bright moon lit up the trail for me during the last three hours of the journey. The tribe was still living in the same settlement, for the women had not completed all the new fur clothes their families required during the winter months, and it would violate one of their most rigid taboos to finish the sewing on the sea-ice,

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rigid taboos to finish the sewing on the sea-ice. My old snow-hut was empty as I had left it, but cold and cheerless without the warm glow of a blubber-lamp. Seeking more comfort in an inhabited hut, I became the "guest" of a man named Snow-Knife, sharing my food with his family and giving them presents from time to time in payment for occupying half their dwelling. The arrangement proved fairly satisfactory for two or three weeks, but later in the winter I changed my quarters and lodged with another family more sensitive to my personal comfort than to my worldly possessions.

The women sewed industriously from morning till night, but the men found the time drag heavily. Some of them were still bringing in the caribou meat they had cached during the summer, and the pokes of blubber left on the coast in the spring. A few set fox-traps obtained the previous winter from Captain Bernard, the first and only trader who had visited their country. The rest stayed quietly at home and put their sealing-gear in order, or helped their wives to scrape the caribou hides.

In one hut that I visited a middle-aged Eskimo was trying to repair a 30.30 Winchester rifle he had purchased from Captain Bernard. A bullet had stuck in the barrel, for, like many a more civilized hunter, he had scrupulously oiled the outside of the weapon, but entirely neglected the inside. He hammered on the

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relight the lamp, sank up to her knees in the icy slush; her terrified shriek made us leap from our beds in alarm. Fortunately the water rose no higher during the night, or we might have had difficulty in escaping to the land. As it was we were able to wait until daylight, when we cut a hole through the back wall and transported our belongings to a safer home beyond the reach of the tide.

I marvelled at the time that the roof of the dwelling did not cave in upon our heads. But a snow-hut is remarkably solid once the warmth inside has converted its walls to ice. Soon after this gale I visited the hut in which I was nearly asphyxiated a few weeks before, and the native who accompanied me stood on its highest block without disaster. He mounted cautiously, it is true, for even ice must be fairly thick to withstand a pressure of 150 pounds; and the walls of this hut were still mainly snow, for we had occupied it only one night. But it was a striking test of the solidity of a snow-house, and explained why the entire half of a dwelling may be cut away without disturbing the other half.

There were so many things of interest in our new settlement, so much that was novel and strange to record in my note-books each evening, that the days passed almost unnoticed. The Eskimos themselves knew nothing of days or weeks; they kept no reckoning even of the months, only of the changing seasons as they affected the food supply.

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Photo by F. Johansen.

The wall sagged in the middle of one side through the weight of an enormously thick rampart of turf.

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some friends in British Columbia, and felt our isolation slip away for a few hours as we joined with the rest of the Christian world in common festival.

Our enlarged party now required more accommodation, so the store became a kitchen fitted with bunks for Castel and Cockney. The two western Eskimos, Palaiyak and Ikey, slept in a tent surrounded by snow-walls covered with a tarpaulin roof. The house itself was reserved for the six members of the scientific staff. That, at least, was our intention; but unfortunately the natives around us were too civilized to read the notice on the door, and inundated our hut as frequently as before.

Christmas ended, I returned to my Eskimos at Putulik, in the Liston and Sutton Islands, taking Palaiyak as assistant and interpreter. The natives whom I had visited on Victoria Island had also gathered there, so that the settlement now consisted of some thirty families living in twenty-five snow-huts. We erected our tent right in their midst, and built a snow-hut over it, both for warmth and for extra storage-room between the two walls. Not wishing to violate any of their customs concerning the sharing of food, we entertained two or three visitors at every meal, and distributed the scraps among the crowd at the door. Trading and visiting among the houses occupied most of the day-time; but after the hunters returned from their sealing we attended the celebra-

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line might represent the coast along which he had recently been travelling; but when I asked him to name and point out the positions of the capes and streams he had passed on the way, he placed his finger indifferently on places as far apart as Victoria Island and Great Bear Lake. Yet an Eskimo of northern Alaska, who was unable to read and had never held a pencil in his hand, once drew me a remarkably accurate outline of the Colville River and all its tributaries, besides many vivid sketches of camp scenes and the hunting of seals and caribou.

Among the specimens I bought at this time was a large lamp which we immediately put to use for warming up our tent. It was made from soft soapstone, and shaped like an enormous saucer cut in half. We filled it with crushed seal-blubber, and along the straight front edge arranged the wick of cotton-grass seeds, which are not unlike cotton-wool. The lamp, when burning perfectly, gave a low smokeless flame an inch high and about sixteen inches long, quite sufficient to keep us comfortably warm even with the door partly open; but as neither Palaiyak nor I were very skilful in adjusting the wick a thin layer of soot began to form over the inside of the tent. We hired two little girls to keep the dogs away when we were absent, and my "daughters," as the people laughingly called them, gradually assumed responsibility also for the lamp, which they managed to perfection. I rewarded them

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beneath the snow-floor, making the prohibition technically invalid. We cooked our caribou meat with easy consciences, and, when the natives upbraided us, pointed to a tiny patch of gravel exposed beneath our feet. Some accepted our verdict, most of them still disapproved; but by that time they were better acquainted with the strange ways of the white man, and believed that we could do with impunity what they could not attempt without disaster.

The village dance-house formed as usual the forecourt of two snow-huts, which kept it at an even temperature with their two large blubber-lamps. One hut was occupied by Ikpuckhuak, the elderly man who had come to my rescue when his fellow-tribesman tried to carry off my knife. Ikpuckhuak means the "Dirty One"; but the name in no wise reflected on his personal characteristics, for the Eskimos were too familiar with the lack of water during seven months of the year to pay much attention to some of its consequences. Ikpuck, as I shall call him hereafter, was actually cleaner than most of his countrymen, provided one gives the word a rather broad interpretation; and his name was no more than an ancient family title which he inherited in childhood along with his other privileges.

We spent several pleasant evenings on his sleeping-platform, reclining comfortably on caribou robes and listening to the natives in the forecourt singing their

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monotonous songs to the accompaniment of a drum. At times their dances were interspersed with strange religious ceremonies, always fascinating to watch and occasionally difficult to comprehend. They knew nothing of Christianity. Their forefathers had taught them to believe in a goddess dwelling at the bottom of the sea who controlled both the winter storms and the supply of seals. They did not worship her as we understand worship, but they held her in great awe, and often tried to secure her goodwill by persuasion or by threats. Many of their misfortunes were laid directly to her door; others were ascribed to the spirits of the dead, or to the machinations of sorcerers. Their sole defence against these imaginary foes lay in their shamans or medicine-men, who claimed to summon into their bodies powerful spirits of men and animals that had voluntarily placed themselves under human control. The medicine-men were thus the physicians, the prophets, and the priests of their little communities. Speaking as the mouthpieces of their spirits, they elucidated the past and foretold the future; and they sent their protecting spirits to bring back the stolen souls of the sick or to compel the sea-goddess to deliver up the seals she withheld from the starving Eskimos. Yet there were many occasions in life when even they could give no assistance, and the people, realizing this, accepted their fate with the fortitude customary to their race.

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123 sticks that only the white man knew how to manufacture; but even they were not powerful enough to restore his wandering senses. Perhaps my hand would be more efficacious. I laid it on his temple, and saw his eyes rest on me without a gleam of intelligence. Then the madness passed out of them, a pleased smile broke over his countenance, and, quietly turning away, he began a casual conversation with some of the bystanders.

771 Performances of this kind revealed to me the heart of Eskimo religion. The natives trusted in their medicine-men, and the medicine-men, with rare exceptions, believed themselves gifted with supernatural powers. The spirits that wander unseen came at their bidding and obeyed their commands. At times they came unsummoned, and a man raved on the hill-sides or on the frozen sea where no one beheld his frenzy.
771 Hysteria is peculiarly common around the Polar basin;
158 the long winter darkness and the loneliness and silence
171 of the hunter's life make the Arctic peoples more susceptible to this disorder than the rest of the human race. So religion and hysteria went closely hand in hand.

114 After measuring all the adults in this village I
125 arranged with a native to guide me to another some
114 forty miles farther west. We had travelled about half
837 a mile when, looking back, I noticed with surprise that
574 a woman was following in our trail. I turned to my

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guide and asked, "Who is this woman, and why does she follow us?" "It's only Snow-Knife's wife," he answered. "She is coming with us to visit her two sisters. Don't trouble about her. She will stay with me throughout our journey, and in the meantime my wife will live with Snow-Knife."

Marriage here was evidently not the institution we are taught to reverence. This woman had openly traded husbands for a few days in order to visit her relatives; and there were times when men seemed to exchange wives without even that excuse. I had read of the custom in books, but its impression was different when it occurred before my own eyes without the least attempt at concealment. It became more intelligible later, with fuller knowledge of their domestic life. The people were not really immoral, for they were doing no wrong according to the standards of life handed down to them through countless generations; and the transfer of wedlock was not made indiscriminately, but according to definite regulations. A man often had wives in half a dozen different tribes, some of whom he saw only once in his lifetime; and the wives had other husbands. But their children were all his children, forbidden to marry one another; and if ever he visited the tribe to which one of his wives belonged he received a cordial welcome, and was free to hunt and seal in its territory like the regular members of the community. A stranger in an Eskimo tribe

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837 A stranger in an Eskimo tribe
609 was a potential enemy who could be killed at sight;
628 but by this system of temporarily exchanging wives the natives could travel in safety from one end of the country to the other.

• 114 So Mrs. Snow-Knife, or Mrs. Wealthy, as she now became for a few days, accompanied us to the village of the "People of the Land on the Other Side." She arranged the skins and meagre furniture of our snow-huts, tended the lamp, and boiled the seal meat for our
574 evening meal. I witnessed her meeting with her two
593 sisters, one much older than herself, the other a maiden of about fifteen years. She herself rejoiced without effusion; the maiden displayed more interest in the white man's sled than in the sister of whom she had heard nothing for nine months; but the eldest woman sat in her hut and wept copiously throughout the evening. They were typically human in their outlooks, these three sisters dwelling where the midday twilight and the midnight sun follow each other season after season. The young girl was just beginning life and her hopes were all in the future; Mrs. Snow-Knife had been married several years and held both the past and the future in an equal balance; but the eldest woman, though still in the prime of life, bore the stamp of hardship on her face and her mind was already looking backward.

574 The "People of the Land on the Other Side" were
535 too hospitable not to hold the usual dance in our

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honour. They had built no dance-house, and did not possess a drum; but about thirty squeezed into an ordinary dwelling-house eleven feet in diameter, where they banged my frying-pan and sang at the tops of their voices until the snow-ceiling, melting with the warmth of so many human beings, began to drip ice-cold water on our heads. The din and odour were terrific, more than flesh and blood could endure; so, pushing my way through the crowd, I retired to the purity of the outer air and gradually regained my senses.

We remained in this village one day and two nights while I measured all its adult inhabitants. Seal meat was not plentiful, and a longer stay would have left my dogs without food. Moreover, it was not necessary, for I was now formally introduced to the people, and could study them at my leisure when they joined the other two tribes in the Liston and Sutton Islands at the end of the month.

My party on the return journey was increased by three—Wealthy's cousin, whose wife was already at the island village, and two girls, Mrs. Snow-Knife's sister and another, who were bound on the high-road to matrimony. The brides piled everything they owned on top of my sled, which creaked and groaned under the extra load. Luckily their trousseaux were not as formidable as their white sisters', or we should never have reached our journey's end. The average Eskimo

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583 bride requires only four things—a meat-knife, a sewing-kit, a lamp, and a cooking-pot. Everything else—the home, skins, tools, and weapons—the bridegroom supplies, and in exceptional cases even the cooking-pot and the lamp.

• 114 48 We travelled as long as there was twilight, passing the snow-hut we had made on the outward journey and building a new one a few miles beyond. There was much confusion when the six of us gathered inside to eat our supper; but the confusion grew worse when we tried to settle down for the night, because the hut, erected in the darkness, was too small, and we could not all stretch out on the platform with our heads toward the door. Finally we compromised. Wealthy's cousin, who had no sleeping-gear, sat up all night, while I turned my bag the other way and slept with my head unpleasantly close to the back wall. Even so we were squeezed as tightly as books on a shelf. There were certainly no regrets when morning came and we set the sled in motion again.

159 58 The girls married a few weeks later. To the best of my knowledge one remained quite satisfied with the husband of her choice, or rather with the husband her relatives selected, for maidens seldom had the liberty to choose for themselves. The other fared differently. Her husband, after living with her for nine months, sent her away on that familiar plea, "incompatibility of temperament." Her adopted father then married

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her to his nephew, who divorced her within three weeks for the same reason. Since she was barely fifteen years of age even after her second marriage, and could easily secure a third husband whenever she wished, we persuaded her relatives to grant her a year of freedom. Childhood came back to her during these months of respite; and no girl in the country seemed happier. Finally she married a young Eskimo brought in by some traders from the Mackenzie River delta; but of her subsequent history I have no record.

Palaiyak and I returned to Bernard Harbour about the middle of January, for Anderson wished me to join him on a trip up the Coppermine River. We conducted to our station an Eskimo family and Ikpuck's step-daughter Sculpin, one of the two little girls who had tended my blubber-lamp. Scuplin, or Jennie, as my colleagues christened her, became a general favourite through her frank smile and merry laughter. More intelligent than most of her people, she knew how to keep out of our way, and spent many quiet hours in a corner mending the rents in our clothing, or gazing at the pictures in our books.

My scientific equipment included an Edison recording phonograph and a number of blank cylinders. Now that I had gathered at the station a small party of Eskimos easily handled and fairly familiar with our ways I used the opportunity to record some of their dance-songs. The Eskimos had paid little attention to

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126 123 the gramophone of Captain Bernard, our predecessor in this region, because they failed to understand the white man's music; but they looked with awe on the uncanny machine that reproduced not only their words but even the ejaculations that unconsciously escaped their lips. The first man who sang into it shivered with apprehension when he heard his voice come back to him out of the horn, and asked in an anxious whisper, "Is there a spirit concealed in the box?" Nothing would induce him to sing again, and for a time I feared that this first record of their music would also be my last. But little Jennie rose to the occasion; she was too young and innocent to fear the white men who had hitherto done them no harm, and the phonograph was an exciting adventure. She sang half a dozen chants for me that evening, and made the house ring with laughter when we played them over again, and she heard the coughing that interspersed the words. Thenceforward I had no difficulty in finding singers, and we carried out of the country records of 150 songs for future study.

114 123 Palaiyak and I paid another brief visit to the island Eskimos before travelling eastward. Jennie went back with us, and we lodged in the house of Ikpuck, her step-father, because it was more convenient than a [142 551] private hut that needed constant guarding. Ikpuck's wife was a comely matron, weighing something under 200 pounds, who rejoiced in the possession of two

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names, Liver and Icehouse. Both seemed rather misleading; she was really neither choleric nor frigid, but a jolly, high-spirited old lady with the warmest heart imaginable, and a tongue more prone to gossip than was strictly advisable. She received us with open arms, and resigned to us half the platform in her hut, where we slept and stored all our possessions. Since her platform looked directly into the dance-house, the centre of social life, we saw everything that happened in the community, or heard it reported to our neighbours.

January was generally the coldest, darkest, and stormiest month in the year, the only month that the Eskimos really dreaded. Blizzards often confined them to their houses five days out of seven, and even if a hunter braved the storms he could find no seal-holes through the driving snow. Hunger then reigned in every hut, and the inmates shivered with cold as they extinguished their lamps one by one to conserve the oil. But the winter of 1914-15 was unusually mild. Blizzards were rare even in January, and they were separated by periods of calm weather when the hunters captured five and six seals daily. So the lamps burned brightly in all the houses and the natives were light-hearted and happy. They gaily assembled in the dance-house each evening to while away the hours with song and dance; and their medicine-men often gave weird performances, not to relieve distress, but simply to maintain their prestige and entertain their audiences.

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few more miles. Even the little children had work to do, for this harvest season would last only until May, when the breaking up of the sea-ice would drive the natives from their sealing to fish and hunt caribou on the land.

It was time now to decide what my own movements should be during the summer months, and I suggested to Ikpuck that I might join his train to Victoria Island, taking my own outfit. The old man was delighted with the plan, and, having no children of his own, formally adopted me into his family, which consisted of himself and his wife Icehouse, Sculpin or Jennie, Icehouse's daughter by a former marriage, and an adopted nephew named Knife-Blade. The Runner, a married son of Icehouse, intended to join the party; probably also two or three families of near kinsmen. The entire band would assemble on the ice within the next three or four weeks, when Ikpuck would send word to me at the station. In the meantime I could travel east with Cox, who needed a companion and a dog-team for surveying a portion of the coast-line.

The short trip with Cox was a pleasant change from constant association with the Eskimos; it was like moving from one world into another. Yet we could not avoid the natives entirely. Two families were hunting large bearded seals in a bay a few miles east of our station, and a small band had camped near Cape

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low; but the hills are brown and barren, or sparsely clothed with a few creeping plants such as dryads, saxifrages, and oxytropi.

On this peninsula I planned to live six months, isolated with my little band of Eskimos. The life on the ice was ended; fishing and caribou-hunting were to be our sole pursuits. As Ikpuck's adopted son I could observe all the details of Eskimo summer life, following its variations from day to day as no traveller had done before me. It was for this purpose, indeed, that I had cut myself adrift from the rest of the expedition until the winter, when the strait would freeze over again and allow me to return to Bernard Harbour. In the back of my mind lay also another plan. Sixty miles to the northward was Prince Albert Sound, the home of an Eskimo tribe that I had not yet visited. Each summer a few of the Sound people met and traded with Eskimos from Dolphin and Union Strait somewhere in the interior of Wollaston Land, and Ikpuck, who was born in this region, promised to guide our party to their usual places of rendezvous. He arranged that we should travel first to the Lake of Dancing within the Colville Hills; later, if necessary, to the Big Lake across the divide or to Prince Albert Sound itself.

We had landed near Okowyarvik Creek, which flows into a long, narrow harbour sheltered from every gale by an island that extends across its mouth. It was the

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usual starting-point for Eskimos travelling to the Great Sound, since the hills immediately north were lower than at any other place either to east or west. Okowyarvik means "the Home of the Dryad," not the wood-nymph of that name, who could never find a home in this desolate land, but the *Dryas integrifolia*, a tiny flowering plant distantly related to our rose. The Eskimos generally paid little attention to the plants around them because they added nothing to their food supply; but the dryad, heather, and willow furnished their fuel during the summer months, and in the hills heather and willow were not procurable.

We lingered a week at "Dryad Harbour," for the season was still early and the snow that covered the land would last another month. While the men were hunting caribou the women overhauled their bags of clothing, putting aside all the heavier garments not needed again till winter. To these they added the furniture of the snow-huts, the long wooden tables, the drying frames, and a few of the stone lamps. Each family made a separate pile of its possessions, and on top of each pile the men deposited their sealing weapons, useless for the life on land. I myself cached nearly all my provisions—pemmican, rice, oatmeal, hard bread, and tea sufficient to last me about a month; only a little tea and cornmeal I retained on my sled, to ease the transition from the "balanced" diet of

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a European to the unvaried meat and fish of my companions. 174

Ikpuck and I deserted the main train on the march inland and wandered away in search of caribou. 224 Small herds of three or four, mostly young bulls, showed up on every hand, but to approach them unseen was amazingly difficult. We circled for two hours around a herd that was grazing on the side of a low ridge, and just as we came within rifle range it suddenly moved its position, caught sight of us, and fled. We climbed the ridge cautiously, and saw three more caribou moving up the valley on the other side. I wished to fire at them when they came within three hundred yards, but Ikpuck, who thought they would approach still nearer, beckoned me to wait; instead of approaching they moved away, and disappeared from our view. A small hill lay ahead of us, which Ikpuck approached from one side, I from the other. As we drew near he discovered three caribou travelling in my direction, and, taking off his jacket, signalled to me to lie down; but I misread the signal, and in my haste to join him alarmed this herd also. Down in a valley a few miles farther on two caribou seemed to be moving toward a distant ridge. We gained its crest before them, built a low shelter of snow-blocks, and waited for them to draw near. One hour passed slowly by, then a second, and still they kept out of

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226 ward from the hole, slowing down to a walk as the end of the line approached the under surface of the ice. The fish, half drowned by its rapid ascent, had then no time to jerk itself free of the hook, although it might easily tear loose if it struck the edge of the fishing-hole. By slowing down to a walk, Ikpuck could govern its passage through the ice with more caution.

For the guidance of the uninitiated angler I should add two rules that the Eskimos have tested and found useful. Respect the craving of trout and salmon for water by turning the heads of your catch toward the pool; then others will surely gather to your hook and seek to join their brethren on the ice. Secondly, when you lower your line into the water again, do not forget to say, "Encore, encore, give me another."

262 The rules concerning diet I cannot recommend with
252 the same confidence. The Eskimos, who knew no vegetables save the semi-digested moss in the stomachs of the caribou, ate only meat and fish, preferably boiled, for second choice dried or frozen, and raw when necessary. Here in the Colville Hills scarcity of fuel made boiled fish a luxury that we could enjoy
262 only two or three times a week. Breakfast consisted
264 always of a half-raw fish taken from a drying-pole and consumed usually in one's sleeping-bag; dinner did not exist, and supper was boiled fish on lucky days
262 and the same as breakfast on unlucky. The digestions
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of my companions seemed proof against every outrage, but my own rebelled. An insidious dysentery attacked me, making me at last so weak that I could hardly drag myself to the fishing-ground. My throat became dry like parchment, and drinking the clear water in the fishing-holes merely aggravated the dysentery without relieving the thirst. Altogether my predicament was rather alarming.

No parents could have been kinder to me at this time than were Ikpuck and Icehouse. Believing that all disease had a supernatural origin, Icehouse tried to exorcise the agencies responsible for my ill-health. That she failed to cure me distressed but did not surprise her, for, as she herself remarked, Eskimo remedies had no efficacy with white men. She showed her sympathy in a more practical manner by giving me the choicest morsels of fish, and by foraging far and wide for dryads in order to cook more frequently. Yet in spite of all her efforts my health failed to improve, and at last I sent The Runner to the Lake of Dancing to bring me a few ounces of malted milk and three pounds of dog-pemmican that I had stored there in a cache. The malted milk lasted me two days, after which I began on the pemmican, prepared forty years earlier for the fur posts of the Hudson's Bay Trading Company. It was brown with antiquity, and consisted merely of dried beef crushed to powder, with here and there fragments of bones; but mixed

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into a paste with cold water it was more digestible than the half-raw fish on the drying-poles, and more palatable than saltless fish boiled over a smoky flame in a cupful of water. So for a week I ate nothing but pemmican. Gradually the dysentery lessened, my strength began to return, and, though the intolerable thirst continued, there was hope of a permanent recovery if in some way we could improve our diet.

I talked the matter over with Ikpuck. He could understand my dislike of raw fish, but not its effect on my health, unless, indeed, my guardian spirit had forbidden its consumption. Yet he would gladly do anything to aid my recovery. It was the end of July; the fur of the caribou was in its prime, and the fishing season nearing its close. He had intended to pass the remainder of the summer wandering in the hills to the north-east, where caribou were numerous but fuel scarce; however, seeing that I might eat nothing but cooked food, we could move southward toward the coast if I wished, and travel over plains amply clothed with heather and willow. We agreed to adopt this second plan and communicated the decision to our companions.

A snow-storm, not an unusual occurrence even in the height of summer, delayed our departure a few days; but as soon as the snow melted again we packed all our fish to the Lake of Dancing and cached it with our other possessions. Then we turned southward, away

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me to take from my own cache a little rice and pemmican, which, being more easily digested than boiled meat, would assist my return to health. The pemmican I carried on my back, but most of the rice I placed in the pack of my largest dog, who ruined it a few hours later by plunging headlong into a deep pool. During the two days immediately following we secured no game of any kind, so that I was driven to share the pemmican with my companions. Hungry as they were, I could hardly induce them to touch it, although they would have killed without compunction any fellow-countryman who attempted to hoard food when they were starving. I was different, they averred, and their ways were not my ways; deprived of my special food, I might be prostrated again by a return of my illness. Their children might eat a little, if I so desired, but as for themselves, they were accustomed to hunger, and would surely kill a caribou on the morrow, or, if not then, on the day following. In the end, however, they agreed to compromise, and divided up half my pemmican, leaving the other half for myself.

Our usual procedure at this time was to march from ten to fifteen miles, then to scatter out in search of game while the women pitched camp. Ikpuck, The Runner, and myself, going out together late one afternoon, discovered a large bull caribou grazing in the centre of an open plain where it would certainly detect us if we attempted to approach. In spite of this The

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855 from some clothes that were packed in a bag on the house-roof. Jennie refused, and petulantly turned her face to the wall. Her cousin entered the hut, and, seeing his playmate sulking in the corner, jeered at her behind her back; but a backhand that neatly struck his eye changed his jeering to a wail. The indignant Icehouse poked her daughter with a stick until she, too, added her voice to the lamentable chorus. Partnership in grief then brought comfort to both children, who left the hut together and built a common playhouse in the snow outside. Pain alone could not make
[147] them weep so readily. I had seen Jennie stumble against a stone and bruise her knee so severely that she limped for two or three days; but when some one asked her if she were hurt she straightened up resentfully and marched ahead without a tear.

114 Even I grew restless at our inactivity. Bernard Harbour seemed so near across the strait, and for seven months I had heard no word of English, and received no news of my comrades on the expedition. In clear weather we could see the Liston and Sutton Islands on the horizon, and the station lay only twelve miles beyond. The dark streaks in the sky that reflected open water had disappeared, and a short excursion seaward revealed no wide cracks or unsafe
123 places in the solid ice. Conditions might be different between the islands and the mainland, but Ikpuck thought that I could make the passage without danger.

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I would have left him with his family, but both he and Icehouse protested. When they adopted me as their son, they said, they had promised my comrades that they would deal with me honestly, and conduct me safely back at the end of our wanderings. How, then, could Ikpuck leave me before he had landed me at the station again and proved to the white men that he had kept his word? I could not resist their argument. My "father" and I left the settlement together on the morning of November 7, and, meeting with no mishaps in our passage, arrived at Bernard Harbour the next evening.

Thus was completed the project that I had outlined for myself the previous winter. By isolating myself among the Eskimos during the months just past I had followed their wanderings day by day from autumn round to autumn. I had observed their reactions to every season, the disbanding of the tribes and their reassembling, the migrations from sea to land and from land to sea, the diversion from sealing to hunting, hunting to fishing, fishing to hunting, and then to sealing again. All these changes caused by their economic environment I had seen and studied; now, with greater knowledge of the language, I could concentrate on other phases of their life and history.

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731 they had captured hardly sufficed to keep them alive.
[225] Now their strength was impaired by starvation, their huts cold from lack of oil in the lamps. One or two families, driven by hunger, had even eaten the dry
[152] sealskin cases of their bows. Perhaps it was the nearness of spring that buoyed up their courage, for none of them showed despondency or gloom, despite their
[574] pinched faces and empty cooking-pots. Indeed, they seemed more distressed by their apparent inhospitality, for several of our visitors apologized at being unable to offer us the usual presents of meat.

[225] We stayed with them three days, and each morning the men left early for their hunting-grounds, although, half blinded by the snow-clouds, they could find few
• 114 seal-holes and captured not a single seal. Our own supplies were running dangerously low; we had full rations for three days only, and the return journey to Bernard Harbour required at least a week. So we reloaded our sled and struck southward to the mainland, hoping to find game of some description as we skirted the coast.

[132] Our departure marked the beginning of even worse weather, for the temperature dropped lower still, and the wind, which had blown in our faces throughout the eastward march, now swung round to smite us from the west. That first day's journey to the mainland tried us all severely, and though I perhaps suffered most—my health being far from good at this period—

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my companions, too, found it difficult to keep their cheeks and noses from freezing. We reached land about four o'clock in the afternoon, and set up the tent beside the first stick of driftwood that was large enough to start a fire. I asked Girling, who was nearly as exhausted as myself, to arrange the boxes and sleeping-gear while the rest of us scoured the beach for more wood; but while I was setting up the stove inside the tent the three men started up the dogs and stole away. It was useless to follow them; I lit the fire, melted some snow in our largest cooking-pot, arranged the tent, and waited.

They were absent about two hours, and brought back, not merely wood, but a caribou. This was an unexpected godsend. We had counted on killing three or four hares, and perhaps a brace of ptarmigan, but not a caribou, for in early March the herds were usually far inland, just beginning their northward migration. This animal had probably strayed from a herd that had wintered near the coast, like those we had seen the winter before on the Coppermine River. But whatever the explanation, it gave us no concern at the moment; our only interest was in the meat, which tided us over a rather serious emergency.

Girling described the hunt very graphically. He and Patsy, having left their rifles behind, remained with the sled while The Runner stalked the animal from inland. The bullet struck its flank, and it fled

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• 114 down the slope to the ice apparently unwounded. Patsy, whipping out his knife, cut the trace of the leading dog, which dashed away in pursuit; the rest of the team followed, and Girling and Patsy flung themselves on the sled as it swept by. Caribou, dog, and dog-team raced wildly over the sea-ice; and down the cliff raced The Runner, his hood thrown back over his head and his mittens lying forgotten in the snow. The free dog caught the caribou by the throat and dragged it to its knees. Then the team came up, and Patsy, leaping from the sled, jumped on the animal's back and plunged his knife into its heart. So the chase ended. The only casualties were the caribou and The Runner, who froze his forehead, cheeks, and wrists in the excitement of the pursuit.

The remainder of our journey to the station was a weary struggle against a cold head wind and driving snow. An unusually violent gale detained us two nights on an islet, and both the dogs and ourselves were reduced to half-rations for the last four days, but no one mentioned the deficiency except Patsy. Being a very energetic hunter, he generally paralleled our course to one side in order to scour the islands and coast-line for game. It happened that on two evenings he failed to overtake us before we had pitched camp and eaten our supper; and on each occasion he angrily reproached us for leaving him *more* than his share, as he thought, of the scanty repast.

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there were mitigating circumstances that pleaded in his favour. We were foreigners in their land, beings partly of another world, who were blessed with many wonderful things that the Eskimos lacked. Though kindly enough after our own peculiar fashion, we neither observed their customs concerning the sharing of food with neighbours, nor assumed the other obligations of their semi-communistic life. If we thus claimed exemption from the only social code they knew, could we fairly expect them to observe their moral code toward us, and regard our property as inviolate? It speaks highly of their character that nearly all of them did observe it, and not only dealt with us honestly, but reproved those of their countrymen who deviated from the accepted path. We had come to this camp prepared for serious trouble, but the goodwill of its inhabitants, prudently directed by the old man, relieved the situation of all danger.

Spring was now fast advancing, the surface of the snow was beginning to thaw under the noon sun, and the night was almost as bright as the day. Girling considered that it was time for him to go back to his vessel a hundred and fifty miles to the west, that he might sail into Bernard Harbour and establish his mission there as soon as the ice broke up in the strait. I offered to escort him, since the interpreter and dog-team he had brought to our station during the winter had long since returned. The trip would be only a

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pleasure jaunt at this season, and I could search the coast-line for the ruins of ancient habitations.

The journey, outward and return, lasted three weeks, for we travelled leisurely, enjoying to the full the clear atmosphere and bright, warm sunshine that had succeeded the winter blizzards and cold. Patches of bare ground here and there relieved the monotony of the white snow, the chirping of spring birds filled the air, and numerous seals basked on the surface of the ice outside their breathing-holes. We saw several tent-rings near the shore, and an arrow and other objects lying beside two human skulls, grim relics of a forgotten tragedy. But what intrigued us most was the discovery of three stumps, rotted almost to ground level, that indicated quite clearly the site of an exceedingly ancient house.

All the Eskimo tribes in the western Arctic, where the coast-line is littered with large spruce and cottonwood trees brought down by the Mackenzie and Yukon Rivers, dwell in houses built of wood. But driftwood is so scarce in the Coronation Gulf area that the natives often made long journeys overland to distant forests in the interior in order to obtain even the small amount of timber required for sleds and narrow tables. Their only fixed dwellings were the huts of snow with which we had become so familiar; houses built wholly or partly of wood were entirely outside their knowledge. Even their traditions failed to record such houses,

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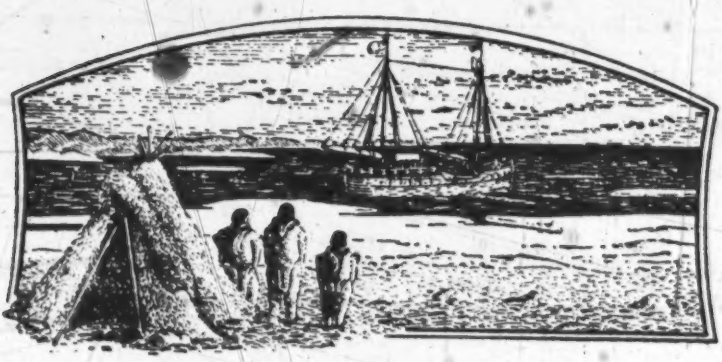

CHAPTER XIII

THE LAST DAYS

000 THE harbour ice broke up about the middle of June, and our schooner swayed once more to the gentle motion of the waves. Though the pack in the strait appeared still solid and immovable, a dark line across the sky indicated open water at no great distance, warning us to hasten the prepara-
126 tions for our departure. The house would remain to
114 serve Girling as a mission building, and some of our supplies were hardly worth freighting away; but there were natives to pay for their services, tents and equipment to store deep in the hold, and thousands of specimens, geological, biological, and ethnographic, to label and pack away in boxes, bags, and tins—any receptacle, in fact, that could be made to serve our needs.

123 Several families of Eskimos that fluctuated between
177 the station and a small fishing-creek four miles away garnered a rich harvest from our packing. They gath-

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they were making their one final appeal. What had my "spirit" answered? What could it answer? When trouble came upon them, as it surely must, and they cried to me for help, would they think me ungrateful if no help came? At last I turned to Icehouse and said, "Sometimes, you know, it is not possible to help." And she answered sadly, "Yes. There are many evil spirits surrounding us, and sometimes no help is possible."

I finished the packing of my specimens before the end of June, and since the heavy ice in the strait would prevent our sailing for at least two weeks, I thought I might travel down to Cape Krusenstern for a farewell view of some Eskimos who were still fishing in the various streams. Patsy was to accompany me, and, with the consent of Ikpuck and Icehouse, I invited Jennie to go with us. She danced with glee at the prospect. Without further delay, we rolled up our packs, loaded two dogs with extra provisions, and marched away over the tundra.

Jennie was the merriest of companions, and the most useful. She laughed when the dogs chased a sandpiper, she laughed when she stumbled over a niggerhead. Her laughter was infectious, and no merrier party ever tramped those northern meadows. She was only twelve years of age, or thirteen at the most, with all a child's love of play and pastime; yet already she knew some of the responsibilities of her sex, and at the

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
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the trackless land to a new fishing-lake in the hope of breaking their fast before another sleep. Food, clothing, and shelter, those primal necessities that generally come so easily to dwellers in more temperate climes, demanded from them ceaseless effort, until the desperate battle to preserve life seemed almost to nullify any purpose for life. Only an invincibly optimistic race, patient, hardy, and good-tempered, could have wrestled with this environment and survived. What could a white man contribute to its struggle?—a white man who appeared for a season only, then vanished as mysteriously as he came.

The day for our departure arrived at last; the date was July 13, 1916. Heavy ice still lingered outside the harbour, but a channel of open water extended to the westward and widened near the horizon. From morning till nearly evening we laboured at our preparations, striking the last of the tents, dismantling the last of the caches. Everything was finished at 6 o'clock, and, after a hasty supper, I went ashore in the dinghy while my companions pulled up the anchor.

My family had pitched its tent at the entrance to the harbour, where a breeze from the sea blowing across the low promontory kept away the mosquitoes. They were seated outside the doorway, intently watching our movements, but Ikpuck and Jennie came down to the beach to pull up my boat. I sat down beside them, and we watched in silence, Jennie alone in her childish